

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Tuesday, November 19, 2019, 9:13 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148**

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Present:

James Morton, Vice-Chair, Boston
Ed Doherty, Boston
Amanda Fernandez, Belmont
Matthew Hills, Newton
James Peyser, Secretary of Education
Paymon Rouhanifard, Brookline
Mary Ann Stewart, Lexington
Matthew Tibbitts, Student Advisory Council, Ludlow
Martin West, Newton

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Absent:

Katherine Craven, Chair, Brookline
Michael Moriarty, Holyoke

Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Vice-Chair Morton convened the meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) at 9:13 a.m. Members introduced themselves.

Public Comment

- Tyrone Mowatt addressed the Board on closing the opportunity gap for gifted and talented students of color.

Comments from Commissioner Riley

Commissioner Riley reported on the recently released 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results, which showed that for the eighth consecutive time, Massachusetts fourth and eighth graders have scored first or statistically tied for first on the reading and math NAEP tests. He noted that the results also point to areas for improvement and opportunities to close achievement gaps between groups of students. He expressed hope that our emphasis on innovative, engaging instruction, coupled with more support for our poorest districts, will address the plateaus in Massachusetts's results. The Commissioner said he has been working with Secretary Peyser to secure additional resources from foundations and philanthropists to support the Department's initiatives on deeper learning.

Commissioner Riley updated the Board on the district review of Boston Public Schools. He said during October, the team visited about 100 schools and observed about 900 classrooms. He noted that the onsite portion of the review includes interviews with city officials, district personnel, school administrators, union representatives, teachers, students, parents, and other interested parties. The Commissioner said we have asked EY-Parthenon to compile some information to provide historical perspective and context. He said he expects to issue the final report on the Boston district review early in 2020.

Commissioner Riley informed the Board that the six-member legislative conference committee is working to reconcile the House and Senate versions of the school finance bill and he will update the Board on any significant developments. He also reported that following a recent legislative report on the state of gifted and talented education in Massachusetts, the Department would be reinstating the Gifted and Talented Education Advisory Council in the coming months. The council will be charged with reviewing the legislative report's recommendations, the literature on acceleration models, and local and national programming to inform the Department's role in supporting schools and districts in this area. The Commissioner said applications for serving on the council will be released in December and the council is expected to meet in late January.

Kaleidoscope Collective for Learning: Overview and Next Steps

Commissioner Riley introduced Komal Bhasin, senior associate commissioner for the Kaleidoscope Collective for Learning (KCL), and Tera Carr, associate commissioner for KCL. Ms. Bhasin provided some personal background. She explained that KCL is premised on deeper learning for *all* students, and the school as the unit of change in education.

Ms. Bhasin discussed the overall strategy of KCL and reviewed priorities for the coming months. She explained that KCL offers a year-and-a-half fellowship for participating districts and schools. The work will include identifying obstacles to deeper learning and ways to surmount them, using the leverage of the Department. She said the Department is planning professional development convenings for the participating schools and districts every two to three months. Ms. Bhasin explained these convenings would engage participants as partners and provide training to enhance their work in creating deeper learning experiences for all students. Participants will contribute, based on their experience, to developing the deeper learning models. Ms. Bhasin said the Department would also support schools through on-site leader coaching and implementation support. Ms. Bhasin said the goal at the end of the initial year and a half is to cultivate exemplars of deeper learning and use the experience of the field to build models and scale them up. Ms. Bhasin highlighted priority projects for KCL in this initial phase. She explained that the intent is to make deeper learning a reality for students throughout the Commonwealth, to help schools prepare all students for post-secondary success.

Mr. West noted that the initiative will work with schools and districts on flexibility and asked what barriers are preventing them from the type of teaching and learning that KCL aims to encourage. Ms. Bhasin said even at this early stage, issues that have raised include school schedules and assessments. She said the team expects to learn more about challenges that schools are facing and will work with KCL participants to propose innovative solutions. Mr. Hills asked about the range of districts that have applied to participate in KCL. Ms. Bhasin said it is a diverse

group, representing elementary, middle, and high schools from all geographic regions of the state. She said the Department has received far more applications than we can take in our inaugural cohort. Ms. Fernandez asked how teacher diversity factors into KCL. Ms. Bhasin said having a diverse teacher force is a central component. Vice-Chair Morton thanked the panelists for their presentation.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the October 29, 2019 Regular Meeting.

The vote was unanimous.

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education FY2021 Budget Proposal and Report from the Board's Budget Committee

Commissioner Riley introduced Matt Hills, chair of the Board's Budget Committee, Bill Bell, senior associate commissioner/CFO, and Julia Jou, budget director, to discuss the budget proposal and report from the Budget Committee. Mr. Hills said the Department has five clear goals articulated on the website, the Commissioner set forth some specific goals in his memo earlier this year, and the budget priorities reflect these goals.

Mr. Bell said the priorities focus on: implementing the Commissioner's deeper learning initiative, the Kaleidoscope Collective for Learning; targeted intervention strategies to improve instructional practice to accelerate learning, culturally responsive teaching, increased student engagement, enrichment activities, and effective school leadership; programmatic and administrative resources for the Department to oversee its expected additional responsibilities under the Student Opportunity Act; innovative assessment resources; increased literacy resources focused on early grade readers, with the goal of funding additional grant opportunities for schools and districts; and professional development resources to implement the new Arts framework and the Health framework when finalized.

Vice-Chair Morton asked for an update on the Student Opportunity Act legislation. Secretary Peyser explained that the conference committee must report out the bill today in order for the Legislature to vote on it tomorrow before the formal legislative session ends; otherwise, it will have to wait until January when formal sessions resume. Secretary Peyser added that as usual he would abstain from voting on the Board's budget priorities because the Board transmits its priorities to him.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with Mass. Gen. Laws chapter 69, § 1A, approve the budget priorities for the FY21 education budget as recommended by the Board's Budget Committee

and the Commissioner, and direct the Commissioner to convey these recommendations and priorities to the Secretary of Education, the Governor, and the Legislature.

The vote was 8-0-1. Secretary Peyser abstained.

Proposed Amendments to Vocational Technical Education Regulations, 603 CMR 4.00

Commissioner Riley said he is proposing revisions to the Vocational Technical Education (VTE) Regulations to the Board in two phases. He introduced Cliff Chuang, senior associate commissioner, and Marnie Jain, College, career and technical education liaison, Lisa Sandler, MOA coordinator, Caitlin Looby, legal counsel, Judith Klimkiewicz, consultant, and James Wilkinson, vocational licensure specialist.

Mr. Chuang said the proposed Phase 1 amendments are intended to support the creation of new VTE programs and expand access for students to the full range of programs; strengthen program quality; and streamline the process for individuals seeking vocational educator licensure and expand the pool of candidates for districts seeking to hire licensed teachers. Mr. Chuang said Phase 2 would address VTE admissions criteria and procedures to promote equitable access; the Department is continuing to engage stakeholders in addressing those issues before proposing further changes to the regulations.

Mr. Chuang highlighted the proposed regulatory changes in Phase 1. One would add a new section that provides a roadmap for districts to pilot new VTE programs that have potential for statewide approval. The second would require that a program of study must be of sufficient scope to address the applicable vocational framework and provide a minimum of 900 program hours. The third would require schools to base exploratory programs on the Exploratory VTE Framework (currently being finalized) and Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. The final change Mr. Chuang highlighted would remove or streamline several requirements related to VTE educator licensure. He said with the Board's vote today, the Department would solicit public comment; develop guidance documents, tools, forms, and web resources for the successful implementation of the proposed regulations; review the comments and revise the regulations as needed; and bring them back to the Board for final action in February 2020. Mr. Chuang added that he expects the proposed Phase 2 changes would be presented in spring 2020.

Ms. Stewart asked about the decision to proceed in two phases. Mr. Chuang said the Commissioner decided to do this to promote further discussion and work with stakeholders around admissions practices and criteria. He noted that the Department is working closely with a small number of vocational technical schools to review their data and ways to address concerns. Mr. Chuang said this work should help inform the second phase of the regulatory changes.

Mr. Hills asked about non-resident vocational tuition. Mr. Chuang responded briefly and offered to provide additional information if needed.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with G.L. chapter 69, §§ 1B and 1F and chapter 74, § 2, hereby authorizes the Commissioner to proceed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. chapter 30A, § 3, to solicit public comment on the proposed amendments to the Vocational Technical Education Regulations, 603 CMR 4.00, as presented by the Commissioner.

The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Doherty announced that next month (December) would be his last meeting as a Board member. He said there is no dramatic reason behind his stepping down; he decided he would like to spend more time with his wife, children, and grandchildren, and traveling. Mr. Doherty said it has been an honor and a privilege to serve on the Board as the union representative. Commissioner Riley thanked Mr. Doherty for his service. Vice-Chair Morton said he has appreciated Mr. Doherty's years of service as a colleague on the Board and as an educator. Members concurred.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m., subject to the call of the Chair.

The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education
and Secretary to the Board